

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMCONSUL MAZATLAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1119

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MAZATLAN 0113

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, MX, EGEN, PINT, CGEN, SNAR, DEA.

SUBJ: TELEGRAPHIC SECTION MAZATLAN HIGHLIGHT REPORT:

PRESS ROUND-UP.

1. LOCAL PRESS HAS GIVEN ONLY SCANT COVERAGE TO APPREHENSION OF MURDERERS OF FREDERICK A. BACHER AND JOHN GHARST AND DAUGHTER LORA LEE BROWN. INFORMATION EMBODIED IN THIS COVERAGE HAS BEEN FOR THE MOST PART INACCURATE, ESPECIALLY DETAILS ON HOW VICTIMS WERE ATTACKED BY THEIR ASSAILANTS AND AMOUNT OF MONEY INVOLVED IN ROBBERY. FOR EXAMPLE, BACHER HAD EIGHTEEN HUNDRED DOLLARS IN TRAVELLERS' CHECKS BUT PRESS STATED HE WAS ROBBED OF THIRTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS. MRS. BACHER, INCENSED AT INACCURACIES WHICH APPEARED IN U.S. PRESS, GAVE SOME PRESS RELEASES OF HER OWN, WHICH CONSUL UNDERSTAND CONDEMNED DELAY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN BRINGING CRIMINALS TO JUSTICE.

2. STEPPED-UP PLANS FOR RIDDING SINALOA OF NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND MAKING THE HIGHWAYS SAFE FOR TOURISM WERE SUBJECTS OF OTHER PRESS RELEASES. GOVERNOR CALDERON ANNOUNCED THAT HE INTENDED TO CLEANSE THE POLICE FORCES FROM THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL DOWN TO THE LOWEST POLICE AGENT. HE STATED THAT HE HAD REQUISITIONED MORE FIRE POWER FOR ALL POLICE OFFICIALS SO THAT THEIR WEAPONS WOULD BE SUPERIOR TO THOSE OF THE ENEMY, THE UNCLASSIFIED

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NARCOTICS SMUGGLERS.

3. THE GOM IS CURRENTLY ENMESHED IN TERMINATING THE HIGH CRIME INDEX IN THE PRINCIPAL CITIES OF SINALOA SUCH AS LOS MOCHIS AND MAZATLAN. ACCORDING TO LOS MOCHIS "EL DEBATE", AN EXAMPLE WAS THE SURPRISE REMOVAL OF THE CULIACAN POLICE CHIEF, A MOVE WHICH WAS ORDERED DIRECTLY BY THE COMMANDER OF THE NINTH

MILITARY ZONE AND COME FROM MEXICO CITY UNBEKNOWNST TO THE GOVERNOR OF SINALOA OR THE MAYOR OF CULIACAN. HIS REPLACEMENT IS A CAVALRY CAPTAIN, ANGEL MORENO RUIZ, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY SERVED UNDER GENERAL RICARDO CERVANTES GARCIA ROJAS, ONE OF THE THREE GENERALS OPERATING CONDOR 1. THE ARTICLE FURTHER STATED THAT THE PRESENT MUNICIPAL POLICE CHIEFS OF BOTH LOS MOCHIS AND MAZATLAN WOULD SOON BE REPLACED WITH MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO WOULD REPORT DIRECTLY TO THEIR RESPECTIVE COMMANDERS, NOT TO THE MAYORS OF THE CITIES INVOLVED.

4. LOS MOCHIS' "EL DEBATE" ALSO REPORTED THAT A CLOUD OF FEDERAL AGENTS HAD INVADDED CULIACAN SEARCHING FOR MARIHUANA AND THAT THE GROWERS, PRIMARILY "CAMPEÑINOS" WERE REPELLING POLICE ACTIVITIES WITH HIGH POWERED WEAPONS. THE ITEM ALSO STATED THAT THE ARMS PROVIDED THE "CAMPEÑINOS" BY THE INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS WERE SUPERIOR TO THE WEAPONS CARRIED BY BOTH THE MILITARY AND MFJP (MEXICAN FEDERAL JUDICIAL POLICE). THE ARTICLE COMMENTED THAT ENTIRE FAMILIES DEDICATED THEMSELVES TO THE GROWING OF POPPIES--THAT THE OCCUPATION WAS

INHERITED. THE FEDERAL DISTRICT ATTORNEY, LIC. CARLOS AGUILAR GARZA, COORDINATOR OF THE MFJP CAMPAIGN IN SINALOA, ADDED THAT THE PROBLEM IS SERIOUS, SOCIALLY SPEAKING, SINCE THE TRAFFICKERS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE IGNORANCE AND THE POVERTY OF THE "CAMPEÑINOS". AFTER A RECENT HELICOPTER FLIGHT OVER THE POPPY FIELDS, THE ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MEXICO, ALBA LEYVA, STATED THAT AMONG THE PROBLEMS FACING THE FEDERAL AGENTS WHEN THEY ARRIVED IN THE DRUG PRODUCING VILLAGES WERE THE

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FOLLOWING: THEY ARE REFUSED FOOD, THE STORES ARE CLOSED, AND THE DRINKING WATER IS CONTAMINATED. SOME TOWNS HAVE BEEN CONVERTED INTO FORTRESSES WHICH ARE INACCESSIBLE TO BOTH THE ARMY AND THE MFJP. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, IN LESS THAN TWO MONTHS, THE MFJP TOGETHER WITH THE ARMY HAVE DESTROYED MORE THAN EIGHT THOUSAND POPPY FIELDS WHICH WERE SPRAYED BY THE MFJP. IN CULIACAN, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THERE ARE MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND CLANDESTINE AIR FIELDS, WHERE DRUG TRAFFICKERS LAND AND PROVIDE HIGH POWERED WEAPONS TO THE "CAMPEÑINOS" TO PROTECT THE POPPY FIELDS.

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5. IN A RECENT PRESS INTERVIEW, GOVERNOR CALDERON INDICATED THAT PRESENTLY SINALOA IS CONFRONTED WITH TWO PROBLEMS: (1) DRUGS AND (2) AGRARIAN REFORM. HE STATED THAT THE PROBLEMS OF DRUG ADDICTION, AND PLANTING AND CULTIVATION OF DRUGS COULD BE EFFICIENTLY COMBATTED BY EDUCATION AND BY PROVIDING SOURCES OF EMPLOYMENT FOR THE "CAMPEsinOS". REGARDING THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM, HE SAID THAT NO ADDITIONAL LANDS WOULD BE DISTRIBUTED IN HIS STATE AND THAT HE WOULD RESPECT THE JUDGE'S DECISIONS, NO MATTER WHAT THE OUTCOME MIGHT BE. HE ADDED THAT TRANQUILITY HAD RETURNED TO SINALOA AND THAT THE CRITICAL MOMENTS IN WHICH SINALOANS LIVED IN 1976 WOULD NOT RETURN BECAUSE "WE WILL NOT PERMIT THEM TO RETURN".

6. THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE OF FEBRUARY 20 CARRIED A FULL PAGE OF OBSERVATIONS MADE BY A RECENTLY RELEASED PRISONER, TERRY BRAYE, WHO SPENT TEN DAYS IN THE MAZATLAN MUNICIPAL PRISON. HIS REMARKABLE INSIGHT, AFTER SERVING SUCH A SHORT TIME, WAS TRULY AMAZING. THE ARTICLE IS ENTITLED "NIGHT OF THE FEDERALES". AMONG THE SUB-TITLES IS "LEVZERS IN THE HALL-

WAYS--RATS AND ROACHES EVERYWHERE". ALTHOUGH SOME PORTIONS OF THE ARTICLE MAY ACCURATELY REFLECT CONDITIONS IN THE JAIL, MANY OF BRAYE'S OBSERVATIONS HAVE IMPROVED WITH THE TELLING. ONE GROSS INACCURACY WAS HIS MENTION OF THE "ONE AMERICAN WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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LESS THAN A YEAR LEFT ON HIS SENTENCE GOT 'ANEMIC DYSENTARY' AND ALMOST DIED. ONLY A NINE THOUSAND DOLLAR FEE GOT HIM A TRIP TO THE HOSPITAL TO SAVE HIS LIFE". THE TRUTH IS THAT THE CONSULAR OFFICER, UPON LEARNING THAT THE PATIENT WAS ILL, HAD HIM HOSPITALIZED AT THE GENERAL HOSPITAL AT NO COST WHATSOEVER. BRAYE ATTRIBUTED THE KIND TREATMENT ACCORDED HIM BY THE MFJP TO THE FACT THAT THEY MUST HAVE "LIKED ME". WHAT HE DIDN'T SAY OR KNOW IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO MISTREATMENT

OF THE TYPE MENTIONED IN THE ARTICLE--CATTLE PRODDING, HANGING BY TESTICLES, SUBMERSION IN WATER-- FOR SOME TIME BECAUSE OF AN INTENSIFIED HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN. MANY OF THE HEALTH HAZARDS MENTIONED-- RATS, ROACHES, OPEN SEWERS, AND LACK OF POTABLE WATER--ARE TRUE. (THE ARTICLE IS BEING POUCHED).

COMMENT: BRAYE'S ARTICLE IS ONE OF MANY NOW SURFACING IN THE U.S. PRESS WHICH ARE CONTRIBUTING TO SINALOA'S WORSENING ECONOMIC PLIGHT.

7. LOS MOCHIS PRISON DIRECTOR, LIC. DAMASO SOTO, ACCORDING TO THE LOCAL PRESS, HAS BEEN ACCUSED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF SINALOA LAW STUDENTS SOCIETY OF DIVERTING PRISON FUNDS TO HIS PERSONAL USE BY SELLING FOOD INTENDED FOR THE PRISONERS, AND POCKETING THE PROCEEDS. THE STUDENTS' ORGANIZATION HAS DEMANDED A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF SOTO'S REGIME. MOST OF THE AMERICAN PRISONERS IN LOS MOCHIS HAVE FOUND IT NECESSARY TO SEND OUT FOR FOOD TO SUPPLEMENT THE PRISON FARE.
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